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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 003336

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: RUSSIA ON PIC AND EULEX

REF: MOSCOW 3123

Classified By: Political Minister-Counselor Alice Wells for reasons 1.4
(b) and (d).

Summary

¶1. (C) Putting down markers on the upcoming Peace Implementation Council (PIC) meeting in Brussels, Russia's Special Representative on BiH and Kosovo Botsan-Kharchenko told us that Russia will seek a "balanced" statement, but would not insist on a timeline for transition. He called the current draft "unacceptable" as it directed too much criticism to PM Dodik. Botsan-Kharchenko floated the idea of a PIC-like coordination body after a transition to the EU Special Representative (EUSR), but rejected HC Lajcak's bid for the EUSR to retain Bonn powers and said Russia was not ready to contribute to the EU mission. He welcomed the November 8 announcement as proof that the BiH parties could compromise among themselves, and continued to downplay Dodik's rhetoric as election-related or provoked by President Silajdzic. With respect to the EU Law Enforcement Mission (EULEX) in Kosovo, he said there was "no chance for EULEX or Kosovo" if Pristina rejected the compromise. End summary.

Upcoming PIC Steering Board

¶2. (C) Building on reftel, Special Representative on BiH and Kosovo Aleksandr Botsan-Kharchenko told us November 17 that Russia would seek a positive outcome and compromise at the November 19 meeting of the PIC Steering Board and would not insist on a concrete timeline for transition to EUSR. He underlined that Russia had no intention of demonstrating a lack of unity, but would seek a "balanced" statement on the need for transition, perhaps drawing from previous PIC statements. He called, however, the current draft "unacceptable," as it devoted four paragraphs to denouncing PM Dodik and one sentence against Presidency Chairman Silajdzic.

¶3. (C) At the session in Brussels, Botsan-Kharchenko said he may pursue side discussions on modalities for continued non-EU state participation after the transition. He outlined Russia's preference to form a consultative body similar to the PIC that would continue both in Sarajevo, at the ambassador-level, and on a bi-annual basis in Brussels, with senior participants from capitals. He justified the continuation of a coordinating body as necessary in "maintaining Russia's role." The special representative confirmed that Russia did not support HR Lajcak's proposal to transfer Bonn powers to an EUSR, noting that the "EU has enough leverage to make the Bosnian parties implement decisions." However, he was ambiguous as to what authorities Russia believed a follow-on PIC should retain.

¶4. (C) Botsan-Kharchenko stated that Russia was not ready to discuss a contribution to the EU Mission, telling us that it depended on the overall relationship between the EU and

Russia, but flagged the positive November 14 EU-Russia meeting in Nice as contributing to a more positive atmosphere. He noted that it was difficult, given the prior history of Russian efforts in BiH, but that Russia remained open to the proposal.

November 8 Deal

15. (C) Calling the statement announced by the BiH ethnic leaderships on November 8 a "pre-requisite to OHR transition," the special representative called for including language in a PIC statement praising the effort, while underscoring the need for implementation. He noted that Silajdzic "must support this agreement," but that Russia was "worried that he won't." He agreed that the PIC members must bring pressure to bear on all the parties to implement the agreement, but noted that we "can't underestimate the ability of the parties to work by consensus and agree on reforms."

SIPA-Dodik Standoff

16. (C) Continuing to downplay Dodik's rhetoric as election-related or provoked by President Silajdzic, Botsan-Kharchenko insisted that Dodik did not seek to undermine the integrity of BiH. He dismissed the dispute between the BiH Prosecutor and the State Investigation and Protection Agency with PM Dodik over documents related to a corruption investigation as a legal issue, with different interpretations of the law legitimately in play. Commenting that the case is "difficult from a legal point of view and

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that the international community should not interfere in the situation," he agreed that the PIC should be ready to discuss the matter.

Kosovo

17. (C) Turning to Kosovo, the special representative remarked that, in his view, Pristina has "no issues of substance" with respect to the EULEX deployment; instead, the Kosovars should recognize that the agreement secures a EULEX presence throughout Kosovo and provides a necessary tool to work with Serb-dominated enclaves. He stated that Russia was positive on the overall agreement, and, as soon as Pristina dropped its opposition, would be ready to work out a presidential statement at the UNSC. Calling it a good way forward for cooperation on the ground, he assessed that if Pristina rejects this agreement, "there is no chance for either EULEX or Kosovo."
BEYRLE